CourseWorks Quick Start

Introduction

CourseWorks (aka "Sakai") is the university's new course management system, which allows instructors to develop and maintain course Web sites. With CourseWorks, instructors can distribute class materials, communicate with students, and promote online discussions. This guide will show you how to access CourseWorks, familiarize yourself with the navigation, and get started with common tasks like editing the course introduction page and creating your syllabus.

Accessing New CourseWorks

You can access your course sites at http://courseworks.columbia.edu. Once you click **Login** you will be asked for your University Network ID (UNI) and password. These are the same credentials you use to log in to Columbia Web sites and to check your email.

Once logged in, you will see links to any course sites you're associated with. You can access this view at any time from clicking My Courses on the upper right (fig. 1)

(Figure 1: My Courses)

NB**:** CourseWorks runs best in the Firefox browser, but the functionality should be consistent when using any modern browser.

Help Documentation

You will also notice a link to the Support module next to the My Courses link (Fig. 2). Here you will find a great deal of information for the specific tools and features not covered in this document, integrated announcement panel and calendar for all your courses, and edit your preferences.

(Figure 2: Help Documentation)

Configuring Your Course's Home Page

To customize your course title and introductory text, click on **Edit** button at the top of the Home page.
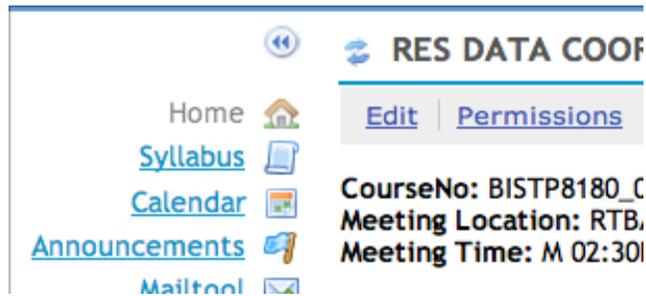
(Figure 3: Edit the Home page)

Edit the Course Title and the Home page text here, and click **Save** when you are ready to save the text.

Site Tools

Within each course site the active tools will appear on the left side of the screen. From Site Settings, the instructors can activate, rename and reorder tools for their course sites.
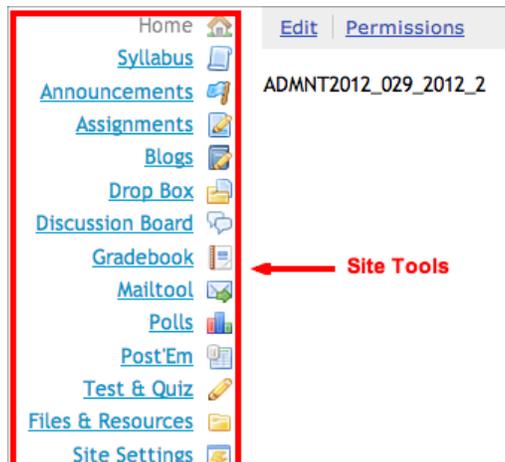
Site Settings

Site Settings is the course site's administrative interface. From the instructor can enable and manage site tools, manage course participants and groups, and view the facebook for the course. To enter the Site Settings view, click **Site Settings** in the site navigation on the left.

Enable Tools

To add, edit, or remove tools in the course site, click **Edit Tools**.
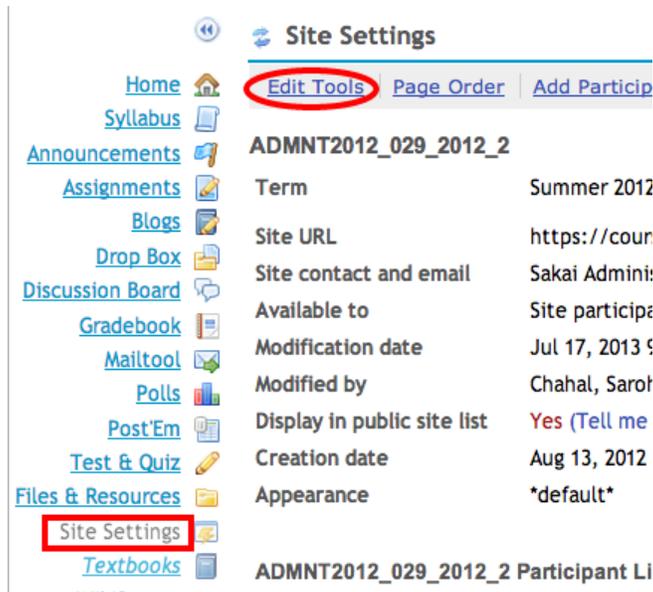
(Figure 6. Edit Tools)

1. Check the boxes next to the tools that you wish to add to your site, or uncheck the box if you are removing a tool.
2. Click **Continue**.
3. On the confirmation screen, you will see a list of your site's tools and any changes you've made. If the list is accurate, click **Finish** and verify your changes when prompted.

Upload Files & Resources

The Files & Resources tool allows you to upload, download, copy, delete, and organize your files and course materials.

To **upload** a file, follow these steps:

1. Click on the **Add** drop down menu
2. Click **Upload Files** (Fig. 7)
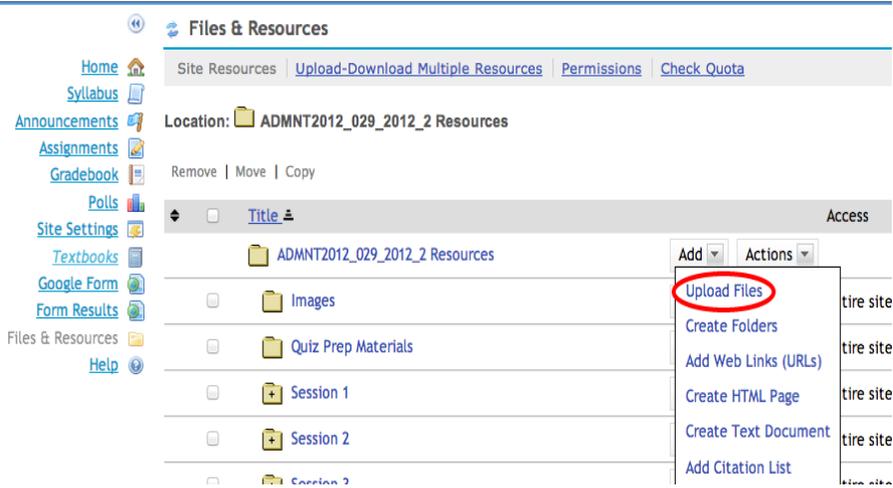
(Figure 7: Upload Files)

3. Click **Browse**
4. Select the file you wish to upload
5. Enter a display name
To upload more files Click **Add Another File**
6. Click **Upload Files Now** (Fig. 8)
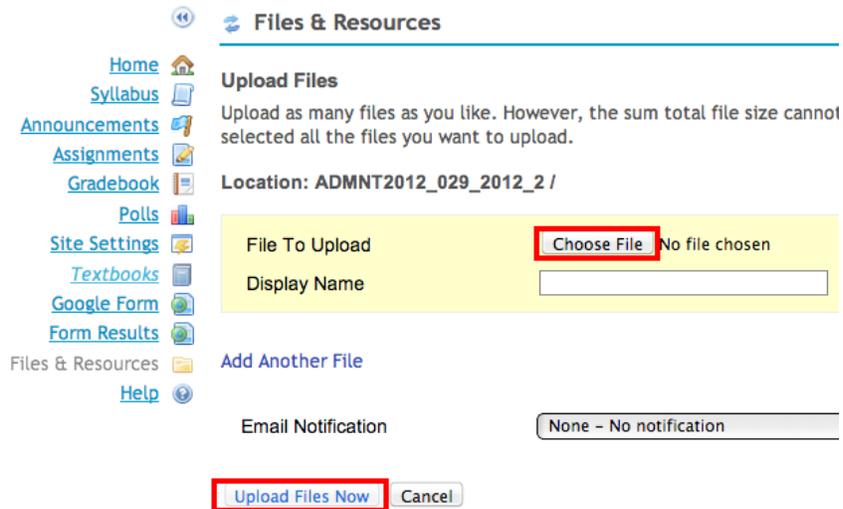
(Figure 8: Upload files)

If you have a large number of files that you wish up upload into your course site, follow the directions under the "Upload-Download Multiple Resources" tab, which will allow you to establish a WebDAV connection to your course site via your computer's desktop.

Manage Participants

If you scroll to the middle of the Site Settings page, you'll see the Add Participants feature. From here you can add or remove students, TAs or other instructors from your course site.

Add Participants

1. Click **Add Participants**.
2. In the Site Members box that appears, list the UNIs of the participants you wish to add to your site. If you wish to add more than one participant, enter each UNI on a separate line without punctuation.
3. Under "Participant Roles", choose to give your newly added participants the same role or different roles (I.E. Student, Teaching Assistant, or Instructor). NB: If you are adding many participants, it is recommended that you give everyone the most common role and update individuals after they have been added.
4. Click **Continue**
5. In the next window, if you chose to give all your participants the same role, select the appropriate role to assign everyone. If you chose to give each participant a different role, use the drop-down list next to each UNI to choose the appropriate role. (Keep in mind that roles can be modified anytime after the participants have been added)
6. Click **Continue**
7. You will now see a confirmation page listing all the updates to your participant list. If you are ready to confirm your changes, click **Finish**

Delete Participants

1. In the participant list, under "Remove", check the box next to the participant (or participants) that you would like to delete
2. Click **Update Participants**

Edit Participant Status

If you'd like to change a participant's role (for instance from "Student" to "TA" or "Instructor"):
1. In the participant list, use the "Role" drop-down list to modify a participant's role.
2. Click **Update Participants**

(Figure 9: Participants List)

Manage Groups

Groups are subsets of participants for a given course site. Groups are useful to organize study sections, project teams, and other subsets of course participants.

The following tools are "group aware", meaning that they can be tailored to work with the entire class population or specific groups:
- Announcements
- Assignments
- Messages
- Resources
- Schedule
- Tests & Quizzes

To access groups from your Site Settings page, click **Manage Groups**.

Create a group

To create a new group:
1. Click **Create New Group**
2. In the "Title" field, enter a title for your group. You may also add a description.
3. From the window on the left, select a participant to add to the group, and then click **>**. Repeat this step until you've added all the members you wish to the group. To select more than one member at a time, hold down the Ctrl key (in Windows) or the Command key (in Mac OS), and select the members you wish to add
4. Alternatively, click **>>** to move all site participants to the right-hand window, select any participants you do not want in the group, and click **<** to remove them
5. When you're finished, click **Add**

Schedule/Calendar

The Calendar allows you to schedule sessions and assignments in an easy-to-navigate calendar layout. The calendar has day, week, month, year, and list views, and can be exported to most desktop calendar clients (E.G. Outlook, iCal).
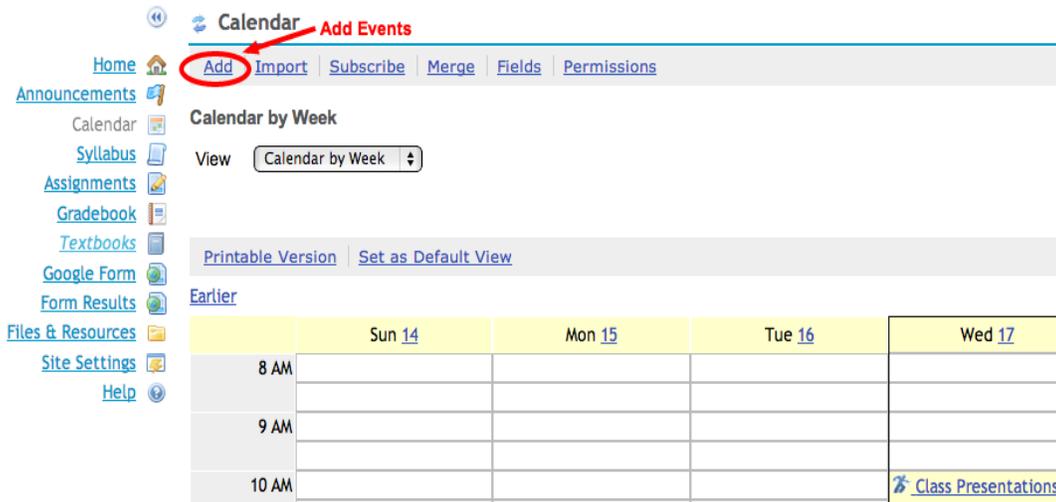
(Figure 10: Calendar Event)

Add items to the Schedule

To create a new item, from within the Schedule tool:

1. While viewing your calendar, click **Add**
2. Enter the information for title, date, and start time. You can specify a duration or end time
3. Under "Message", use the text editor to create and format the body of your calendar item
4. If you'd like to attach a file to your calendar item, it is recommended that you link to the file in "Files & Resources". To do this, type a description of the file you will attach, and highlight the text (Fig. 11)
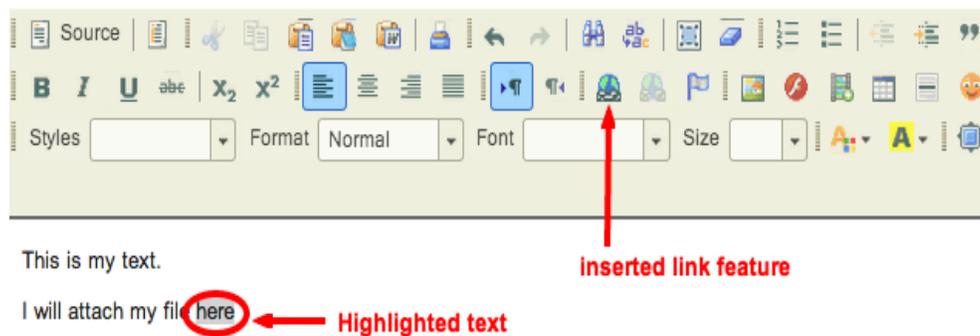
(Figure 11: Highlight Text and Insert Link)

5. Once you click on the Insert link feature, the Link dialog box will open (Fig 12). Click on **Browse Server.**
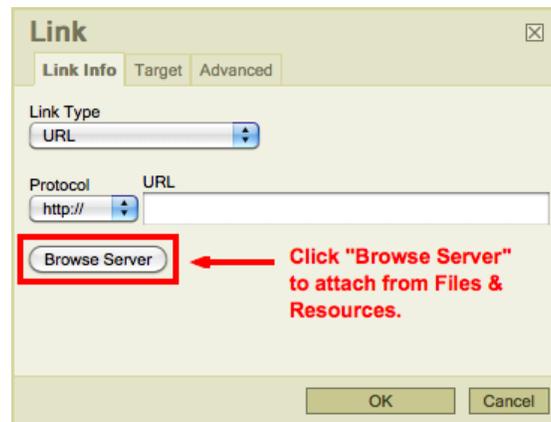
(Figure 12: Browse Server to attach from Files & Resources)

6. Once you click Browse Server, you'll see your site's Files and Resources. Simply select the file you'd like to attach. Once you've selected the item from your Files and Resources, click **OK**, and your file will be hyperlinked

7. If your site uses the Groups features: to display the event to all members of the site, check **Display to site**. To display the event only to members of a certain group, check **Display to selected groups**, and then use the checkboxes to choose which groups or sections can view the calendar item

8. If your event will take place more than once, you can also schedule recurring instances by clicking **Frequency**. Once you've set the frequency, click **Save Frequency**

9. Optionally: you can indicate "Event Type" from the list of choices in the dropdown menu, and you can enter a location for your event

10. To save your event and post it to the calendar, click **Save Event**

Syllabus

CourseWorks' syllabus tool is a good place to locate general information about your course as well as week-by-week (or session-by-session) "class plan" information.

To add a syllabus item:
1. When in the Syllabus tool...
2. Decide whether you want to create a single item (click **Add Item**) or use the **Create Multiple Sessions** link to set up a semester's worth of syllabus sessions. CCNMTL's recommendation is to use the **Create Multiple Sessions** option in either case, since the interface for adding sessions and editing content is more straightforward.
3. Follow the prompts and once you've set up your sessions, click on the **Bulk Edit** option. Click on the **Edit Details** link for the session you want to edit.
4. Enter a title for your syllabus item, and then enter your content. You can copy and paste text from another file (like a Word or Google doc).
5. Under "Attachments", you can attach a file from your desktop or from "Files & Resources," or specify the URL for a file on the web (this might be a Word document or

PDF version of your syllabus).

6. Choose whether to have members of the site notified automatically via email when the item is posted.
7. When you are finished, click **Post** to save and post the item, **Preview** to view it before saving, **Save Draft** to save it for later editing, or **Cancel** to cancel
8. Click **Update** to finalize

Some Notes About the Syllabus Tools:

The **Bulk Edit** window can be extremely useful for updating sessions' dates/times, adding syllabus sessions to the calendar, changing sessions to "posted" or "draft" mode, or deleting sessions in bulk. When it comes time to reorder sessions, the standard syllabus view is the place to be (simply drag and drop the sessions into the correct order, but be sure to update the dates too if you've used them).

If you simply want to link to an external file (or a file that you've housed in the Files & Resources section), you may use the **Redirect** option (at the top of the Syllabus tool).

Some Notes About Pasting From Word:

When pasting text from Word docs, you may experience some odd formatting problems. This is because when you're pasting text from Word you're also pasting in HTML code that doesn't play well with most web text editors, like CourseWorks.

Even when using the **Paste from Word** tool, we may continue to see formatting problems. In these cases, the most surefire way of 'stripping away' all the code from pasted text is to Paste as Plain Text.

- After you've copied text from your Word doc (or any other rich-text source), simply use the **Paste as Plain Text** icon to paste the text into your text editor. (Fig. 13)
- Any formatting will be disabled, and you can reapply your rich text formatting from within the CourseWorks text editor.
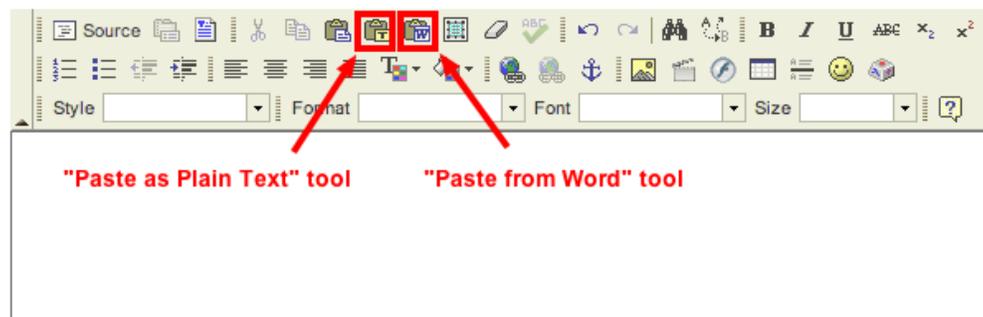
(Figure 13: The "Paste from Word" and "Paste as Plain Text" tools)

Announcements

The Announcements tool is used to inform site participants about any important events or notifications. Announcements can have multiple attachments, such as documents or URLs. They can be targeted to the whole class, or specific groups. Unlike messages sent via the Mailtool, Announcements remain accessible on the Course Site after their initial creation and appear on the site's homepage.

To create an Announcement:

1. In Site Tools, click Announcements. On the Announcements screen, near the top, click **Add**. In the text box next to "Announcement title", type the subject of your announcement
2. In the text box under "Body", use the WYSIWYG editor to create and format the body of your announcement
3. Under "Access", select how to display your announcement
4. Under "Availability", select **Show** to release your announcement or **Hide** to hide it, or select **Specify Dates**, and then select a beginning date and ending date for the file's visibility. (Note: If you choose to specify dates, any email notifications will be sent out on the specified beginning date)

Mailtool

The Mailtool provides the ability to create a message from your Course Site that distributes email directly to your participants' Columbia email accounts, and can be targeted to the entire class, specific groups/roles, or individuals. The Mailtool also keeps a log of your sent mail.

To compose and send a message:

1. In your Site Tools, click **Mailtool**
2. Click **Compose**
3. In the "To" field, you will see "Roles" and "Groups". Once clicked, these buttons enable dynamic dropdown lists of roles and groups for your Course Site
4. You can select all within a role or group by checking the box next to it. If you'd like to select individuals *within* a role or group, click on the word itself to enable a dynamic list of participants within that role or group
5. Enter the content for your Subject and Message using the text editor
6. Under "Attachments", you can attach a file from your local computer or from Resources, or specify the URL for a file on the web
7. When you're finished, click **Send** to send your message (Fig. 14)
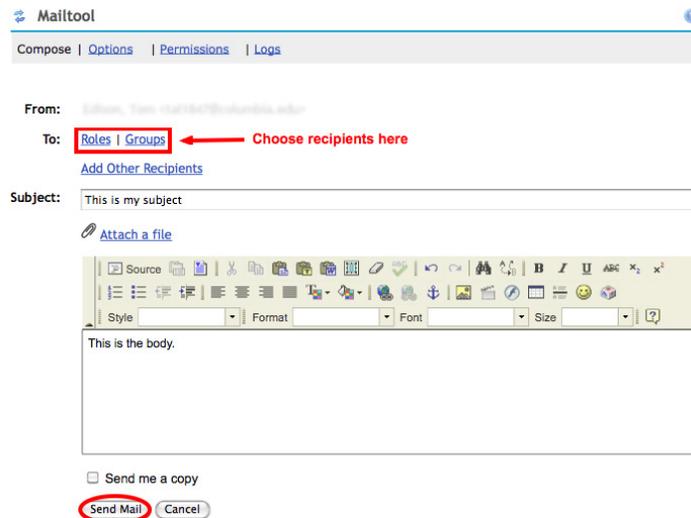
(Figure 14: Composing Mail)

Further Resources

There are a number of additional resources available to Columbia faculty for help with New Courseworks.

Online
- Consult our Knowledge Base for frequently asked questions:
  http://support.ccnmtl.columbia.edu
- Consult the CourseWorks help pages: https://sakai.cc.columbia.edu/portal/help/main
- You can also launch the Help modules from within CourseWorks by clicking any of the blue question mark icons.

In Person
- Attend one of the Center for New Media Teaching and Learning's CourseWorks workshops. To register for any of our workshops, go to the CCNMTL's workshops schedule. (Available at http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/events)
- Stop by the CCNMTL's Faculty Support Lab in Butler Library room 204, or our CUMC office located in the Armory.

By Phone or Email
- You can reach a CCNMTL Educational Technologist at (212) 854-9058 or email

CCNMTL@columbia.edu
- For Courseworks technical support and troubleshooting, please call the CUIT Help Desk (212) 854-1919 or email courseworks@columbia.edu